



**BILLING CODE 3510-22-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**RIN 0648-XE583**

**Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Northeast Multispecies Fishery; Approved Monitoring Service Providers**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of approved monitoring service providers.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS has approved five companies to provide at-sea monitoring services to Northeast multispecies vessels in fishing year 2016. Regulations implementing Amendment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan require third-party at-sea monitoring service providers to apply to, and be approved by, NMFS in a manner consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act in order to be eligible to provide at-sea monitoring services to sectors.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the list of NMFS-approved sector monitoring service providers are available at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable/species/multispecies/> or by sending a written request to: 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930, Attn: Mark Grant.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mark Grant, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281-9145, fax (978) 281-9135, email [Mark.Grant@noaa.gov](mailto:Mark.Grant@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Amendment 16 (75 FR 18262; April 9, 2010) to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) expanded the sector management program, including requirements to ensure accurate monitoring of sector at-sea catch and dockside landings,

and common pool dockside landings. Framework Adjustment 48 to the FMP (Framework 48, 78 FR 26118; May 3, 2013) revised the goals and objectives for sector monitoring programs.

### **Standards for Approving At-Sea Monitoring Service Providers**

Regulations at 50 CFR 648.87(b)(4) describe the criteria for NMFS approval of at-sea monitoring service providers. NMFS is approving service providers for fishing year 2016 (beginning May 1, 2016) based on: (1) Completeness and sufficiency of applications; (2) determination of the applicant's ability to meet the performance requirements of a sector monitoring service provider; and (3) documented successful performance as NMFS-funded providers in fishing year 2015. Northeast multispecies sectors are required to design and implement independent, third-party at-sea monitoring programs in fishing year 2016, and are responsible for the at-sea portion of the costs of these monitoring requirements.

For fishing year 2015, NMFS approved A.I.S., Inc.; East West Technical Services, LLC; MRAG Americas, Inc.; Fathom Research, LLC; and ACD USA Ltd. as service providers. Once approved, providers must be able to document ongoing compliance with performance requirements in order to maintain eligibility (§ 648.87(b)(4)(ii)). NMFS can disapprove any previously approved service provider during the fishing year if the service provider in question ceases to meet the performance standards. NMFS must notify service providers of disapproval in writing.

### **Approved Monitoring Service Providers**

NMFS received complete applications from five companies interested in providing at-sea monitoring services in fishing year 2016; these were the same five service providers that were approved for fishing year 2015. The Regional Administrator has approved all five service providers as eligible to provide at-sea monitoring services in fishing year 2016 because they have met the

application requirements, documented an ability to comply with service provider standards, and have been determined to have met the service provider performance criteria:

**Table 1. Approved Fishing Year 2016 Providers**

Provider Name	Address	Phone	Fax	Website
ACD USA Ltd.	1801 Hollis St Suite 1220 Halifax, Nova Scotia Canada B3S 3N4	902-749-5107	902-749-4552	<a href="http://www.atlanticcatchdata.ca">www.atlanticcatchdata.ca</a>
A.I.S., Inc.	14 Barnabas Rd P.O. Box 1009 Marion, MA 02738	508-990-9054	508-990-9055	<a href="http://aisobservers.com">aisobservers.com</a>
East West Technical Services, LLC	1415 Corona Ln Vero Beach, FL 32963	860-214-2435	860-223-6005	<a href="http://www.ewts.com">www.ewts.com</a>
Fathom Research, LLC	1213 Purchase St New Bedford, MA 02740	508-990-0997	508-991-7372	<a href="http://www.fathomresearchllc.com">www.fathomresearchllc.com</a>
MRAG Americas, Inc.	65 Eastern Ave Unit B2C Essex, MA 01929	978-768-3880	978-768-3878	<a href="http://www.mragamericas.com">www.mragamericas.com</a>

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: April 25, 2016

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Emily H. Menashes,  
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National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-09970 Filed: 4/28/2016 8:45 am; Publication Date: 4/29/2016]